

# NAVY MEDICINE LIVE

THE OFFICIAL BLOG OF U.S. NAVY AND MARINE CORPS HEALTH CARE • 2011 & 2012 WINNER OF BEST NAVY BLOG

Written on SEPTEMBER 9, 2014 AT 3:59 PM by SVANDERWERFF

## WTP: Fortifying Resilience in our IA Sailor

Filed under [FLEET AND THE FLEET MARINE FORCE](#) [OPERATIONS](#) [U.S. NAVY](#)

(NO COMMENTS)

*By Cmdr. Cherie Blank, head, WTP Care Team*



Our mission is to transition Sailors from a high tempo, hazardous environment to more routine everyday activities.

It was early February and after a busy morning in clinic I sat working at my desk trying to finish my notes.

As I worked, an email message popped up at the bottom of my screen. It was an email from my Specialty Leader, “You’re not going to believe this, but I need one of you for an IA assignment, in Germany!”


I had to read the message twice then after scratching my head I wondered, why would the Navy need a Family Nurse Practitioner in Germany? Ok, I’ll bite. I soon learned of the small Navy detachment known as the Warrior Transition Program (WTP) located in Sembach, Germany.


My husband is a Navy Anesthesiologist, in 2010 he returned from an IA assignment in Afghanistan. As a former WTP attendee he would be able to give me a firsthand account of the program. Later that day, I asked him what he knew or remembered about the WTP


### Navy Medicine Video


Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.


### Navy Medicine Social Media

 Follow us on Twitter

 Join us on Facebook

 Read our publications

 View our photo stream

 Watch our videos

### Navy Medicine Live Archives

- [February 2015 \(3\)](#)
- [January 2015 \(12\)](#)
- [December 2014 \(17\)](#)
- [November 2014 \(11\)](#)



I was assigned to the Care Team which is comprised of a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, a Family Nurse Practitioner, a Chaplain, and a Hospital Corpsman.

and if he had been there. My husband recounted that upon his return, his orders included a stop in Kuwait for WTP. During this stop, returning IAs turned in gear and weapons and were provided “informational briefs”. Before arriving in Germany, this was the extent of my understanding of the WTP’s mission.

The WTP was commissioned in 2007 and was located at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. In December, 2012 the Program moved to Germany. Since then, we have taken care of over 6900 returning Sailors. Our mission is to transition Sailors from a high tempo, hazardous environment to more routine everyday activities. This 4 day program allows time for decompression and provides tools and strategies that assist Sailors in achieving a successful reintegration back into their units, homes, and communities. After discussions with returning Sailors, including my husband, it’s apparent this program has truly evolved and transformed since its inception.



Third Location” refers to a safe place between the combat zone and the member’s home that is conducive to creating a state of mind more prepared to reintegrate back into their everyday lives.

The program is located near Ramstein Air Force Base, a normal stopover hub for flights returning from operations in U.S. Central Command. This convenient stopover and its surrounding environment, affords an ideal location for our Third Location Decompression program. “Third

Location” refers to a safe place between the combat zone and the member’s home that is conducive to creating a state of mind more prepared to reintegrate back into their everyday lives.

My first week in Germany, as I spent time meeting the staff, engaging with returning Sailors, and participating in the program, I thought to myself, “Wow, what a fantastic group of people!” I was assigned to the Care Team which is comprised of a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, a Family Nurse Practitioner, a Chaplain, and a Hospital Corpsman.

October 2014 (15)

September 2014 (20)

August 2014 (14)

July 2014 (13)

June 2014 (8)

May 2014 (11)

April 2014 (9)

March 2014 (14)

February 2014 (7)

January 2014 (7)

December 2013 (7)

November 2013 (12)

October 2013 (7)

September 2013 (14)

August 2013 (13)

July 2013 (11)

June 2013 (22)

May 2013 (15)

April 2013 (14)

March 2013 (14)

February 2013 (14)

January 2013 (12)

December 2012 (11)

November 2012 (11)

October 2012 (7)

September 2012 (9)

August 2012 (12)

July 2012 (13)

June 2012 (17)

May 2012 (22)

Our job is to execute the syllabus which is guided by the Combat Operational Stress Control (COSC) model used to identify and mitigate stressors associated with combat deployments. There is an awareness and understanding within mental health and deployment health communities that the acute transition phase after a combat deployment is associated with an increased level of stress.

This time of transition may be a contributing factor leading to depression, anxiety disorders, and even suicide within the ranks of our returning war fighters. With that in mind, the program is here to assist the members in preparing for future challenges associated with reintegration back into their families and careers. The Care Team coordinates and facilitates activities designed to strengthen the body, mind, and spirit of returning Sailors. These objectives are accomplished through interactive



The success of the program is largely based on the devotion, commitment, and enthusiasm that our staff has towards our fellow returning Sailors.

workshops, reintegration trips to local German towns, pet therapy, guest speakers, and physical activities such as yoga, hikes, and runs all in a beautiful, picturesque setting.

The success of the program is largely based on the devotion, commitment, and enthusiasm that our staff has towards our fellow returning Sailors. It is an honor and privilege to be a part of this mission and to provide this priceless service to our Sailors as they return home.

Ultimately, the returning Sailors are the ones that always say it best. Here are some memorable quotes from Sailors that have recently completed the WTP:

*“The Navy got it right on this program. Just having fresh air and green surroundings (trees & grass) was enough to generate a large relief “sigh”... I didn’t realize how much I needed to decompress until I got here”* (E4, 1st deployment)

*“What every returning warrior needs whether they know it or not”* (E7, 3rd deployment)

*“I’m very grateful for this transition program. As much as I wanted to go home, this time was very much needed.”* (E6, 2nd deployment)

*“This place gave me the time and areas to decompress and let the emotions come to the surface. Thank you”* (ENS, 3rd deployment)

These are only a few grateful expressions from our Sailors that after a long and arduous deployment feel welcomed back into the Navy family and are able to return home rested, with lifted spirits, and ready for their next mission!

For more information about the WTP visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NavyWTPWarriorTransitionProgramSembachGermany>

April 2012 (14)
March 2012 (13)
February 2012 (14)
January 2012 (13)
December 2011 (13)
November 2011 (20)
October 2011 (22)
September 2011 (12)
August 2011 (16)
July 2011 (10)

svanderwerff tagged this post with: [BUMED](#), [mental health](#), [military](#), [Navy](#), [Navy Medicine](#)

Read 108 articles by [svanderwerff](#)

